

REMARKS

In response to the Office Action mailed on August 19, 2008, Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration in view of the following remarks. No claim amendments have been made. Thus, claims 1-15 remain pending for examination with claim 1 being the sole independent claim. No new matter has been added.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §102

Claims 1-7, 9-12 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as purportedly being anticipated by Willmore (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0179156). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections.

Applicant initially notes that the present rejections are difficult to fully comprehend as set forth in the Office Action. More particularly, the examiner simply makes reference to various figures and paragraphs of Willmore as purportedly disclosing each of the elements recited in the claims. However, the Office Action includes no specific reference, such as by reference numbers, to identify which features of Willmore purportedly correspond to the claimed elements, such that it is not at all clear from the Action how Willmore purportedly anticipates the claims. Accordingly, should the examiner continue to apply Willmore against the claims, Applicant respectfully requests that any future communication specifically identify the particular features of Willmore that purportedly correspond to the claimed elements.

Independent claim 1 is directed to a display and control device for medical equipment including units connectable to an electric bus. The display and control device comprises at least one display/control unit and a base unit. The display/control unit includes a display device having a plurality of activatable pixels, a display activation device which activates the pixels of the display device on the basis of data supplied, a transparent input device disposed on a surface of the display device that is to face an observer, an input evaluation device which evaluates inputs made via the input device, and a unit connector with which the display activation device and the input evaluation device are connected and by which the display/control unit can be connected to an electric bus. The base unit includes an electric bus for the communication of units connected thereto, a plurality of connector devices at which the display/control unit can be connected to the electric bus via the unit

connector, and a configuration device which is connected with the electric bus and which, after connection of the display/control unit to the electric bus, transmits configuration data determining display contents and input areas of the display/control unit via the electric bus.

Willmore is directed to an interactive multi-user display arrangement for displaying goods and services. The arrangement is described as a "video wall" that includes a large two-dimensional array of monitors and terminals for displaying information and for allowing user interaction to occur in a commercial environment. The Willmore "video wall" does not relate to control panels for monitoring and controlling the operation of other devices, for example medical devices, as recited in claim 1.

Willmore further discloses an arrangement of individual personal computers for use as human information input and output devices. The personal computers are shown as interactive screens and input devices (i.e., keyboards and touch screens) that are arranged as a row below a matrix of a display region which is arranged above a row of user access terminals (see paragraph [0043], and FIGS. 1 and 5). Contrary to the personal computers taught in Willmore, which function independently within the described commercial environment, the display/control units, as recited in claim 1, are necessarily linked to a base unit that provides specific functions for the display/control units in order to form the overall display and control device. In this regard, the display/control units must be attached to a base unit in order to provide the functions of displaying information and receiving user input. Because Willmore fails to disclose a central base unit communicating with display/control units attached thereto on providing communication between the units, claim 1 distinguishes over Willmore.

Willmore also fails to disclose at least the base unit as recited in claim 1 because the personal computers used with the Willmore system for user interaction with the display arrangement are independent devices for allowing user interaction. The link between the individual personal computers and the central server described in Willmore is different from the interaction between the display/control units and the base unit according to the claimed invention.

Willmore also fails to disclose a base unit that includes a bus, a plurality of connectors for a plurality of display/control units, and a configuration device connected to the bus and adapted for transmitting configuration data via the bus to the individual display/control units attached thereto as

recited in claim 1. In this regard, the display/control unit, as recited in claim 1, depends on the base unit and the configuration device provided therein to perform according to the requirements of the display and control device which is specifically suitable for operation of medical equipment as disclosed in the present application.

Willmore further fails to disclose a unit connector with which the display activation device and the input evaluation device are connected and by which the display/control unit can be connected to an electric bus provided with the base unit via a plurality of connector devices included with the base unit such that a configuration device in the base unit provides data to display/control units that are also attached to the electric bus. In contrast, Willmore appears to teach use of touch screens as input/output devices for personal computers rather than for use as display/control units connected to a base unit which together form the display and control device as recited in claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that Willmore fails to anticipate independent claim 1. Accordingly, the rejection of claim 1 under §102 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Claims 2-7, 9-12 and 15 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §103

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over Willmore in view of Zerhusen (US Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0052787).

Claims 13 and 14 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as purportedly being unpatentable over Willmore in view of Suga (US Patent No. 4,800,376).

Without acceding to the propriety of the above rejections, claims 8, 13, and 14 depend directly or indirectly from independent claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons set forth above. Accordingly, withdrawal of these rejections is respectfully requested.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, this application should now be in condition for allowance. A notice to this effect is respectfully requested. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, Applicant hereby requests any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee, the Director is hereby authorized to charge any deficiency or credit any overpayment in the fees filed, asserted to be filed or which should have been filed herewith to our Deposit Account No. 23/2825, under Docket No. H0075.70110US00.

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Respectfully submitted,

By 

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